

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A method of providing a VPN communication between two or more network devices of unknown network address at least a first one of which network devices does not initially know the other network devices internet network addresses, the method comprising:

providing a verification authority connected to the internet remote from the two or more network devices and capable of verifying the identity of the two or more internet network devices;

providing a configuration server connected to the internet remote from the two or more network devices and capable of supplying to each verified internet device the entire configuration data for that verified internet device;

providing each of the two or more network devices  
having no provision to permanently store the user configuration  
data, but each of the devices containing configuration  
information sufficient to contact a designated internet address  
of the remote verification authority, providing within each of  
the two or more network devices, a routine which securely  
contacts the remote verification authority, providing the  
identity of the network device, and using the designated internet  
address of that remote verification authority, and subsequently  
~~and each of which loses its configuration data on power loss~~  
~~comprising providing a network device without user configuration~~  
~~data, providing within the network device a routine which~~  
~~securely contacts a remote verification authority, and~~  
downloading from a remote configuration authority authorized by  
the remote verification authority the entire configuration data  
each time the device is initialized, for one of the two or more  
internet network devices, each time that device is initialized,  
reloading that device with the downloaded configuration data; and

storing the ~~devices-allocated~~ internet network address  
~~addresses~~ of the network device at the verification authority~~the~~  
~~server, the server being queriable for the allocated network~~  
~~addresses of the two or more network devices, and wherein~~  
~~communications can be initiated between the two or more network~~  
~~addresses from this data~~

repeating the process for each of the other network devices so that each of the other network devices downloads from the remote configuration server authorized by the remote verification authority the entire configuration data for that particular internet network device each time that particular device is initialized and reloading that particular device with the downloaded configuration data, and storing the allocated internet network address for that particular device at the verification authority, and initiating a VPN communication between two or more of the network devices, by sending an instruction from the verification authority to one of the network devices by supplying to that network device the allocated internet address of at least one of the other network devices so that the recipient internet device can communicate with the other network device.

22. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the two or more network devices are routers.

23. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the routers form part of ADSL modems.

24. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the configuration data is downloaded as a single transaction.

25. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the configuration data is lost when the network device loses power.

26. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the configuration data remains unchanged for the duration of the network devices powered on cycle.

27. (previously presented ) The method as claimed in claim 24, wherein the configuration data is only downloaded upon a power up sequence.

28. (new) A method of providing a VPN communication over the internet between two or more internet network devices having an allocated or other internet address at least a first one of which network devices does not initially know the other network devices internet network addresses, the method comprising:

providing a remote authority connected to the internet remote from the one or more network devices and capable of verifying the identity of the one or more internet network devices; and

requiring each of the network devices to communicate with the remote authority to inform the remote authority of the current public IP address of the network device, and storing the current public IP address of each network device at the remote authority,

wherein a VPN can be initiated from the remote authority by sending a request to at least one of the network devices to connect to another of the network devices by sending to the at least one network device the current public IP addresses of the other network devices to which the at least one network device is to be connected.

29. (new) A method as claimed in claim 28, wherein a user sends a request via secure internet access to the remote authority to create a VPN between some or all of the network devices whose addresses have been stored at the remote authority.

30. (new) A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein each of the two or more network devices communicate with the remote authority on schedule to send statistics for storage and analysis.

31. (new) A method as claimed in claim 30, wherein each of the two or more network devices are routers.

32. (new) A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein the routers form part of ADSL modems.

33. (new) A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein each of the two or more network devices does not have any means to permanently store its private configuration data but instead is provided with configuration information sufficient to contact only a designated internet network address of the remote authority, providing within the network device a routine which securely contacts the remote authority using the designated internet network address of that remote authority, and subsequently downloading from a remote configuration service authorized by the remote authority the entire configuration details and software for the specific internet network device each time the device is initialized.

34. (new) A method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the configuration details and software are downloaded as a single transaction.

35. (new) A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein the configuration details and software are lost when the network device loses power.

36. (new) A method as claimed in claim 35, wherein the configuration details and software remain unchanged for the duration of the network devices "powered on" cycle.

37. (new) A method as claimed in claim 36, wherein the configuration details and software are only downloaded upon a power up sequence.

38. (new) A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein the remote authority sends a code to at least one of the network devices which forces it to download the configuration details and software.

39. (new) A method as claimed in claim 34, wherein the user configuration details and software can be changed by a user via a secure internet connection to the remote authority.